

REMARKS

I. INTRODUCTION

Claims 1, 4, 6, 8, and 10-13 have been amended. No new matter has been added. Claims 3, 7, and 14 have been cancelled. Thus, claims 1-2, 4-6, and 8-13 are pending in the present application. In light of the above amendments and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that all presently pending claims are in condition for allowance.

II. THE 35 U.S.C. § 101 REJECTION SHOULD BE WITHDRAWN

Claim 13 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §101 for being directed to non-statutory subject matter. (See 4/6/08 Office Action, p. 2). Claim 13 has been amended to recite “a storage medium” which is supported by at least paragraph [0087] of the Specification. Accordingly, claim 13 is tied to another statutory class. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of claim 13 should be withdrawn.

III. THE CLAIM OBJECTIONS SHOULD BE WITHDRAWN

Claim 12 is objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c), as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. (See 4/6/08 Office Action, p. 2). Claim 12 has been amended. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 12 is allowable, and that the claim objection should be withdrawn.

IV. THE 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) REJECTION SHOULD BE WITHDRAWN

Claims 1, 5-6, and 8-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) for being obvious over U.S. Patent Appln. No. 2008/0082325 to Tsuji et al. (hereinafter “Tsuji”) in view of U.S. Patent Appln. No. 2004/0039568 to Toyama et al. (hereinafter “Toyama”). (See 4/6/08 Office Action, pp. 2-4)

Each of the independent claims has been amended to recite the allowable subject matter as indicated by the Examiner. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that all the pending claims are allowable.

CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the presently pending claims are in condition for allowance. All issues raised by the Examiner having been addressed, an early and favorable action on the merits is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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